



# ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

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## EPA TO OVERSEE CLEANUP OF TVA KINGSTON FOSSIL FUEL PLANT RELEASE

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[Atlanta, GA – May 11, 2009] Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency signed an enforceable agreement with the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) to oversee the removal of coal ash at the TVA Kingston Fossil Fuel Plant in Roane County, TN, where more than five million cubic yards of coal ash spilled. Under the Administrative Order and Agreement on Consent (order) which was entered into under the Superfund law, EPA will oversee the cleanup and TVA will reimburse EPA for its oversight costs.

"EPA is bringing to bear its resources and expertise under federal law to work in partnership with the State of Tennessee and local officials to assure a comprehensive cleanup of the TVA coal ash spill, one of the largest and most serious environmental releases in our history," said EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson. "Our goal, like that of the State of Tennessee, is to get the job done for the people in Roane County and downriver communities."

"EPA will work with TVA and Tennessee to ensure that the cleanup of the site is comprehensive, based on sound scientific and ecological principles, moves as quickly as possible, and complies with all Federal and State environmental standards," said EPA Acting Regional Administrator Stan Meiburg. "Protection of public health and safety remains a primary concern, along with the long-term ecological health of the Emory and Clinch Rivers."

The order requires that TVA perform a comprehensive cleanup of coal ash from the Emory River and surrounding areas. On Dec. 22, 2008, a dike at an impoundment for coal ash failed, releasing approximately 5.4 million cubic yards of coal ash into a branch of the Emory River and its tributaries as well as onto almost 300 acres of adjacent land.

TVA's work will be subject to review and approval by EPA, in consultation with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), to ensure full compliance with the Superfund law. Once the removal of the ash is complete, TVA will be required to assess any remaining contamination to determine whether additional actions may be needed.

"TDEC welcomes EPA's action and the continued collaborative partnership between our agencies," said TDEC Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan. "This successful partnership is vital to the cleanup of the TVA ash spill and we will continue to work with EPA to ensure the cleanup in Roane County is thorough and protective of both public health and the environment."

Coal ash at the site contains arsenic, cadmium, chromium, copper, lead, mercury, nickel, selenium and zinc, which are hazardous substances as defined under Superfund. The terms of the order require that the disposal of coal ash from the spill meet specific protective disposal standards for landfills, such as synthetic liners, leachate collection systems and groundwater monitoring.

To facilitate public involvement, upon EPA's request, TVA will provide \$50,000 to award to an eligible community group to contract an independent technical advisor. The purpose of hiring such an advisor is to help the group interpret technical documents related to response actions which will be proposed to address the mid-term and longer-term site cleanup goals and then share the knowledge gained with the larger community.

For additional information about the Order and EPA's response, visit:  
<http://www.epa.gov/region4/kingston/index.html>



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